

**Telecommunications &
Broadband Services****Regulatory Update***Type of Report***INDUSTRY REPORT**

Anna Maria Kovacs, Ph.D., CFA
(617) 576-5764
akovacs@yesinvest.com

Kristin L. Burns, Ph.D.
(617) 576-5764
kburns@yesinvest.com

Gregory S. Vitale
(617) 576-5764
gvitale@yesinvest.com

August 22, 2002

THE STATUS OF 271 AND UNE-PLATFORM IN THE REGIONAL BELLS' TERRITORIES

- Since our May report, the FCC has granted 271s in four states: Georgia and Louisiana for BellSouth and Maine and New Jersey for Verizon. Applications for seventeen states' 271s are before the FCC now. By year-end we expect all of Verizon to be covered by 271s. We expect Qwest to have 271s in all but one or two states (Minnesota and Arizona being the ones we expect to lag). We expect BellSouth to have all its 271s except Florida. Finally, we expect SBC to add California late in 2002, but do not believe the Ameritech states will get their 271s until the first half of 2003.
- As part of the 271 process, UNE rates since May have been reduced in many states, most notably in the Qwest Region, but also in SBC and BellSouth states. We expect some more UNE reductions (Massachusetts, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are pending for Verizon, for example) but expect the pace to slow given how much UNE rates have decreased and given that the 271 process that drives some of the cuts is nearing its end.
- For the CLECs, the lower UNE rates present the opportunity to enter the local market with minimal up-front investment. It is not clear, however, whether some of the more troubled companies, like WorldCom, will be able to take full advantage. We view UNEP as being positive for the IXC's, particularly AT&T, but do not believe that it is enough to stem the declining revenues and profitability of the consumer long-distance market.
- From the RBOC-investor's perspective, UNEP presents several problems. One is the reduction in revenues that comes from converting retail to wholesale revenues. The other is the pricing compression that comes from the RBOC's own attempts to restructure their prices to compete with the new entrants. Finally, there is the exposure during a period when an RBOC cannot yet enter long-distance, but the IXC's have begun to enter its local market. Among the RBOCs, SBC is by far the most exposed. In California and in the Ameritech states, it has super-low UNEP prices and no ability to counter an IXC's entry with an all-distance plan. It is possible that Verizon will also see some meaningful share loss in the next few months, but we do not see the IXC's being as focused on it as they are on SBC, particularly in California.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE STATUS OF 271 AND UNE-PLATFORM IN THE REGIONAL BELLS' TERRITORIES	3
APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO UNEP REPORT, MAY TO AUGUST, 2002	7
SUMMARY OF RBOC CHANGES	8
COMPANIES MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT	9

INDEX OF EXHIBITS

1: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - ALL RBOCS	10
1A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - ALL RBOCS	11
2: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - BELL SOUTH	12
2A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - BELL SOUTH	13
3: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - QWEST	14
3A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - QWEST	15
4: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - SBC	16
4A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - SBC	17
5: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - VERIZON	18
5A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - VERIZON	19

The information contained herein has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but we do not warrant its completeness or accuracy. Any prices, options and estimates expressed reflect our judgment and are subject to change at any time without notice. This document is not an offer or solicitation for the purchase or sale of any securities or financial instruments, and it does not constitute investment, legal or tax advice. Securities and financial instruments mentioned herein may not be suitable for all investors. Investors must make their own investment decisions in consultation with their professional advisers in light of their specific circumstances. The value of investments may fluctuate. Information about past performance of an investment is not necessarily a guide to, indicative of, or assurance of, future performance. Securities and financial instruments mentioned herein may not be qualified for sale in all states. Commerce Capital Markets, Inc. or one of its officers, directors, affiliates or employees may have positions or interests in transactions in securities or financial instruments mentioned herein for options with respect thereto and may also act as an underwriter, placement agent, advisor, or lender to an issuer mentioned herein. Additional information relative to the subjects discussed is available in our offices. Commerce Capital Markets, Inc. is a wholly owned non-bank subsidiary of Commerce Bank, N.A. Commerce Bank, N.A. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Commerce Bancorp., Inc., a multi-bank holding company located in Cherry Hill, NJ.

©2002 Commerce Capital Markets, Inc. Philadelphia, PA

Ratings

Strong Buy Outperform market near-term and long-term by over 10%	Market Outperform Outperform market long-term by over 10%	Market Perform Perform in-line with market (+ or - 5%)	Market Underperform Underperform market by over 10%
--	---	--	---



THE STATUS OF 271 AND UNE-PLATFORM IN THE REGIONAL BELLS' TERRITORIES

Over three months have passed since we last published our report "The Status of 271 and UNE-Platform in the Regional Bells' Territories". Given the recent flood of 271 filings with the FCC and the concomitant changes to UNE-Platform (UNEP) rates made by individual state commissions, we thought it timely to provide an update.

- The flood of applications for in-Region long distance entry under section 271 of the Telecom Act (271) is reaching its crest. Fourteen 271s have been granted to the Regional Bells (RBOCs) so far, and the FCC has applications for seventeen more before it right now: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina for BellSouth; Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Montana, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming for Qwest; New Hampshire, Delaware, and Virginia for Verizon.
- By year-end 2002, we expect 271s to cover all BellSouth states except Florida, all Qwest states except Minnesota and possibly Arizona, and all Verizon states. SBC has a good chance of having California granted by year-end, and a slight chance of having Michigan granted as well, with the rest of the Ameritech states likely to slip into the first half of 2003.
- As the RBOCs have prepared to submit their 271s, they and their state commissions have made changes to their unbundled network element (UNE) prices. While commissions do occasionally change UNE prices independently of the 271 process—as New York did earlier this year and as Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas and Pennsylvania are doing now—most changes have been made as part of the 271 process. Thus, both because UNE rates have been lowered sharply in most states over the last year and because the 271 process is ending, we expect a slower rate of change to UNE prices over the next year or two than we have seen in the last few months.
- The actual implementation of UNEP accelerated in the last few months, as competitive carriers (CLECs) have focused more on this market. WorldCom's MCI division, in partnership with Z-Tel launched its Neighborhood Plan in April. AT&T has added local UNEP-based service in six states to its original two since March of 2002 and will probably add another two states this year. In early 2002, AT&T was offering UNEP-based local service only in New York and Texas. Since March, it has added Michigan, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, California, and New Jersey. It has indicated that it will also enter Pennsylvania and Massachusetts this year. We expect it to push hard in California, where it will fight hardest to protect its long-distance market. WorldCom's MCI division introduced its Neighborhood plan in April and appeared ready to pursue entry in at least the urban zones throughout most of the country. Entry by these long-distance carriers (IXCs) has been partly in response to potential entry by the RBOCs into the long distance market in a given state and partly in response to lower UNE prices. Given the financial problems at WorldCom and the changes in AT&T's structure and management as it merges its Broadband



unit with Comcast it is somewhat difficult to predict how hard they will push UNEP. We expect some backing off on WorldCom's part, and a harder push in a small number of states on AT&T's.

- At least in theory, the greatest exposure to changes in UNE prices is to SBC. AT&T just began deploying UNEP in California, where SBC will not be able to respond on the long-distance side till around year-end 2002, at best. AT&T is also in Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio, where it is unlikely that SBC will be able to respond on the long-distance side till sometime in the first half of 2003. As we indicate below, UNEP discounts are greatest overall in the SBC Region. BellSouth is seeing UNEP-based entry primarily in Georgia and Florida, but AT&T has not yet entered Florida. Florida is the only state in which we do not expect BellSouth to have a 271 till late first quarter 2003. Qwest's rates have recently dropped in a number of states, so that the Regional average UNEP rate has dropped from \$28.21 to \$23.97. However, we do not believe that entry into Qwest's territory is a high priority for the IXCs at any price. Verizon's rate at \$20.23 is the second lowest on a Regional basis, but that rate is relatively stable vs. May of 2002. It is also worth noting that Verizon has not lost much market share since rates in New York were lowered in January. AT&T has indicated that it will enter Pennsylvania and Massachusetts this year, but neither the timing nor the level of effort in those states is clear to us.
- The Supreme Court has affirmed the FCC's right to designate TELRIC (Total Element Long Run Incremental Cost) as the methodology by which UNE prices are set. More broadly, in its May 2002 Verizon Communications v. FCC decision, the Supreme Court appeared to affirm the FCC's right to designate any method other than rate-of-return, which is specifically precluded by the Telecom Act, for the purpose of setting UNE prices.
- The long-term survival of UNEP is, nevertheless, in question. In its May 2002 Verizon decision, the Supreme Court reaffirmed the "necessary and impair" standard, which it had already highlighted in its January 1999 Iowa Utilities Board v. FCC decision. On May 24th, in its USTA v. FCC decision, the D.C. Circuit of Appeals remanded to the FCC the 1999 UNE order in which the FCC attempted to refine the list of required UNEs in accordance with the Supreme Court's "necessary and impair" standard. The D.C. Circuit also vacated the FCC's line-sharing order. The FCC has appealed back to the full D.C. Circuit some aspects of the court's decision.
- All of these judicial decisions will have an impact on the triennial review which was initiated by the FCC in December of 2001 to decide which UNEs still meet the "necessary and impair" test. The triennial review was expected to conclude this year. If the D.C. Circuit does accept the FCC's appeal, we believe it is unlikely that the FCC will issue an order in the triennial review till after the court rules, most likely some time next spring. Aside from delaying the conclusion, the various court decisions are likely to drive the FCC toward a more granular analysis than it had done in the past. That was the bent of the current FCC anyway, but the D.C. decision reinforces it. For example, we would not be surprised to see switching removed as an element in some



markets fairly quickly and in others over some longer transition period. Other elements also might be removed over time in some geographic and customer markets. If the FCC decides to take granularity down to the wire-center level, it may leave actual implementation in the hands of the states, but with fairly tight rules to guide that implementation. In the context of UNEP, what is significant about the removal of an individual element is that it makes it necessary for the CLEC to do some work to reassemble the line when it inserts its own equipment. *That will make it more difficult to move large numbers of customers rapidly.* Thus, the timing and outcome of the triennial review is very important both to the CLECs/IXCs who use UNEP and to the RBOCs who are wholesaling lines to those CLECs/IXCs at deep discounts.

- The actual financial impact of UNEP on either the RBOCs or their competitors is, of course, what investors care about. Unfortunately, it is difficult to quantify because it depends so much on the companies' strategies. The more CLECs are able to cream-skim in a given market, the better their own margins and the greater the damage to the RBOC. The CLECs' ability to cream-skim, in turn, depends not only on the CLECs' own strategies, but on the RBOCs' win-back efforts, which often include the introduction of new pricing plans and the RBOCs' ability to offer all-distance plans. Thus, damage to the RBOCs' financials comes not only from the conversion of retail revenues to wholesale revenues, but from a broader repricing in response to competition. The offset from long distance appears to be fairly minor, at this point. Although ultimately all-distance customers may be "stickier" than those who use only one service, initially both sides are likely to spend more on marketing to fight churn than they did before.
- Our May 1, 2002 report included one effort at such an analysis. It found that UNEP creates a discount of about 19% to 42% below retail residential revenue. Using the same retail rates, those discounts would now range from 24% to 50%. Another way to look at the issue is to use the FCC's rate reference book, which relies, in turn, on TNS bill-harvesting data. According to this data, average residential spending per household on local service is \$426 per year and on long-distance \$176 per year. Assuming 1.2 lines per household, that would equate to about \$30 per line in local revenue plus about \$4 per line in access charges for a total revenue per line of about \$33-\$34. That figure falls within the range of \$30-\$34 for retail consumer revenue that we had estimated in May, although both calculations present potential problems. For the TNS data, specifically, it is not clear whether taxes and Universal Service Fund contributions which an RBOC would simply pass through to the government are included in the revenue. With that caveat, we are using \$33.50 as a national average residential rate. That leads to UNEP discounts on a Region-wide basis of 27% in BellSouth, 28% in Qwest, 48% in SBC, and 40% in Verizon. The TNS numbers also indicate that the RBOC would need to gain more than three long-distance customers to make up for the revenues from any local customer it loses (\$474 of local plus access revenue vs. \$128 of long-distance revenue net of access). And—given the different margin structures of the industries—it needs more than that to make up for the lost cash flow. Of course, to the extent that an IXC can capture small business customers whose



retail spending is higher than that of consumers, the damage to the RBOC is greater. For some time, at least, while the industry restructures itself into an "all distance" market, the UNEP vs. 271 game is likely to be "negative-sum," with both the RBOCs' and IXCs' profits hurt by lower revenue and higher marketing costs.



APPENDIX

STATE-TO-STATE FULL UNEP (DEM) (MAY) (MAY 1998) \$/min

Changes in methodology and corrections of errors:

- We changed our MOL (minutes of use) assumption from 1200 to 1411, to account for toll minutes, based on footnote 252 of the FCC's Pennsylvania order.
- For the columns that calculate full UNEP based on DEM (dial-equipment minutes), there is no change. Thus, for comparison, we are showing full UNEP based on DEM for both May and August in our tables.
- We corrected an error in the formula that calculated amortized non-recurring charges for Verizon's MA, NH, NY, DE, PA. For NV, KS, MO, OK and TX, we now have some non-recurring charges that we did not have in our last iteration. For Maryland, we are no longer using the compliance rates that we used in May. Statewide loop rate averages changed in several BellSouth, Qwest and Verizon states, though the actual rates did not, based on new estimates of the distributions of lines per zone: KY, LA, MS, SC, NM, ME, RI, PA.
- Once we assemble our data, we ask all the relevant state commissions, RBOCs and the two major IXCs to comment on its accuracy. We received specific feedback on the accuracy of our tables from all the RBOCs and many states.

Summary of findings:

- UNE prices continue to trend down.
- For all RBOCs the full UNEP average (assuming DEM) dropped by 10% from that which we reported in May.
- On a national basis, full UNEP average (assuming DEM) now stands at \$20.28 vs. the \$22.58 average we reported in May.
- The range is a high of \$24.38 for BellSouth and a low of \$17.50 for SBC, within the range we predicted in our May report.
- SBC experienced a roughly 20% decline (with an even sharper decline in California) and Qwest experienced a roughly 15% decline in full UNEP (DEM) average since our May report.
- The RBOC-wide total switching and transport average dropped 21%, from the \$8.34 we reported in May to \$6.59 in August.
- Several states' full UNEP (DEM) price appear to increase or actually increased from that which we reported in May. In some cases, as noted above, we changed the non-recurring formula. In some cases we changed the distribution



of loops among zones, thus changing the average. In a few cases, rates actually rose. In AL, FL, LA, MS and SC, there is now a cross-connect charge that is part of the non-recurring charges that we amortize. In Oregon, the port rate increased slightly.

— Anna Maria Kovacs, Ph.D., CFA

— Kristin L. Burns, Ph.D.

Gregory S. Vitale



COMPANIES MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Price</u>
BellSouth	BLS	\$25.44
SBC	SBC	\$27.89
Qwest	Q	\$2.82
Verizon	VZ	\$31.18
AT&T	T	\$11.79
WorldCom's MCI	WCOLQ	\$0.12
Z-Tel	ZTEL	\$1.44
Comcast	CMCSK	\$22.99
Dow Jones Industrial	DJIA	8,887.87
S&P 500 Stock Index	SPX	941.06



[illegible]

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMIS reports. CC'All estimates

[illegible]

Source: Company financial reports and ABMS reports. CMA estimates.

TABLE A-1. COMPANY-WISE DATA FOR THE TOP 100 CARRIER, MAJOR SUBSIDIARY - BLUE SOUTH

STATE	COOPERATE (per month)	LOCAL ORIGINATING SWITCHING (per month)	LOCAL TERMINATING SWITCHING (per month)	OTHER SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD (per month)	DD
-------	-----------------------	---	---	---	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings, including tariffs, information from agreements and ARMS reports. CUM estimates

[illegible]

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. (CAH estimates)

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. CVM estimates.

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARJIS reports. CCAH estimates.

[illegible]

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including reports, SEC 10K estimates

[illegible]

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. (c) All estimates.

STATE	OTHER										TOTAL DPM
	Local originating	SWITCHING	SWITCHING	TRANSPORT	MTD	DLT (per month)	Transport (per month)	Other Switching and Transport (per month)	FFA (per month)	AMORTIZED NRE (per three per month)	
Maine	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.873
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Massachusetts	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.870
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
New Hampshire	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	2.007
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
New York	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.910
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Rhode Island	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.000
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Vermont	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.009
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
DC - WASH DC AREA	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.117
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Illinois	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.914
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Maryland	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.058
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
New Jersey	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.781
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Pennsylvania	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.799
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Vermont	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.871
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
West Virginia	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	1.777
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	

Source: Companies' financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARIAS reports. CCA estimates

RESEARCH DIRECTORY



Business Services

William Sutherland, Director of Research
Michael Viola

(215) 282-4019
(215) 282-3874

Retail: Specialty & Electronics

Richard A. Zimmerman
Ryan S. Zeichner

(215) 282-4017
(215) 282-8016

Specialty Chemicals & Materials

Christopher M. Crooks, CFA
Dawn G. Moehn

(215) 282-4018
(215) 282-4014

Telecommunications & Broadband Services

Anna Maria Kovacs, Ph.D., CFA
Kristin L. Burns, Ph.D.
Gregory S. Vitale

(617) 576-5764
(617) 576-5764
(617) 576-5764

Telecommunications Equipment, Connectware & Network Security

William R. Becklean, CFA
Michael Kern
Guojia Zhang

(617) 576-5850
(617) 576-5848
(215) 282-8020

Administration

Elizabeth-Anne DeStefano

(215) 282-3877

Institutional Sales & Trading

(866) 519-6400

SBC Communications, Inc. (SBC)

Meeting with SBC CFO highlights key initiatives; no estimate or ratings change.

Analyst Comment
11:05 AM – August 22, 2002
Market Outperformer
Large-Cap Value
Price: US\$28.11
United States

Stock data		Price performance		
52-week range	US\$47.34–23.30	Absolute	1M	3M
Yield	3.8%	Rel to S&P 500	5%	–19%
			–7%	–17%
Capitalization		Forecasts/valuation		
Market cap	US\$93.5bn	EPS*	2002E	2003E
Latest net debt/(cash)	–	CSCOPE EPS*	US\$2.30	US\$2.30
Free float	–	CSCOPE P/E	–	–
Shares outstanding	3325mn	* May differ from US GAAP		

SBC considers fixing the UNE–P mess, as a prime corporate objective. Delayed LD entry in key locations, combined with the lowest UNE–P rates in the country, have uniquely exposed SBC to profit–eroding share loss. Despite this, SBC's CFO Randall Stephenson still sees stable cash flows through aggressive cost cutting, combined with the ability to maintain trends in share repurchases and dividend hikes. Consolidation in wireless is another key objective of SBC. Acknowledging the proliferation of conversations among wireless carriers, Stephenson indicated all talks are still preliminary. In the meantime Cingular is raising prices, sacrificing sub growth, and looking to improve profits.

Full details

WHAT TO DO WITH THE STOCK? We continue our cautious view of telecom, although recent stock price declines make us somewhat less cautious. Within the group the Bells and rural telcos should provide the best returns. And, within the Bells, we continue to view Verizon as the best choice right now. As management indicates, share loss to UNE–P is going to be quite damaging to SBC. And we believe it will suffer the greatest consequences of this phenomenon among the three Bells. Thus, the valuation premium that SBC trades at relative to Verizon on P/E, EV/EBITDA, and dividend yield is probably not sustainable over the next six months. We continue to use our current EPS estimates of \$2.30 for this year and next.

UNE–P A BIG PROBLEM WITHOUT LD. SBC has been the most vocal critic of UNE–P, and is working hard to raise prices and diminish the negative effect. In the absence of pervasive long distance approval, UNE–P has been and will continue to be very damaging to SBC. With LD approval in the Ameritech region not likely until the middle or second half of '03, and California not likely until yearend '02, SBC stands quite exposed at the moment. However, we should not extrapolate the SBC experience uniformly to the other RBOCs. No others face the unique combination of low priced UNE–P, high residential rates (in the Ameritech region), big concentrated industrial states, and no LD capability. Thus, we don't see Verizon in particular, and BellSouth to a lesser degree has having the same degree of exposure. So, yes, if an ILEC loses a customer to UNE–P it's a big hit to the bottom line – but it has to lose the customer for the hit to be taken. And in our view VZ and BLS are likely to be able to offset this materially better than SBC over the next year. It should be noted that SBC has been enjoying these same benefits share retention in its states where it has long distance approval. SBC intends to file cost studies in key jurisdictions, using the regulatory path as one attempt at raising rates. In addition, it continues to try to use bundling as aggressively as possible to offset share loss.

WIRELESS CONSOLIDATION A KEY OBJECTIVE. Newspaper reports have

Frank J. Governali, CFA
frank.governali@gs.com
Portland: 1–207–772–3300

Jason Armstrong, CFA
jason.armstrong@gs.com
Portland: 1–207–772–3391

Goldman Sachs
Global Equity Research

FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT GOLDMAN SACHS' RATING SYSTEM AND OTHER DISCLOSURES, REFER TO THE END OF THIS MATERIAL, GO TO <http://www.gs.com/research/hedge.html>, OR CONTACT YOUR INVESTMENT REPRESENTATIVE.

exaggerated the speed of wireless consolidation and the progress that has been made to date. However, the desirability of getting a deal done is obvious, and the company acknowledged active conversations. Mr. Stephenson noted that of the two options for deals AWE presents less dilution but greater regulatory and integration hurdles. Voicestream presents higher dilution but far easier regulatory approval and integration. Furthermore, similar to press accounts, he indicated a deal for Voicestream may be impractical without taking in DT as an equity participant (i.e. no all-cash deal). And, importantly, SBC is open to that possibility.

WIRELESS PRICE HIKE, DESPITE SLOWER SUB GROWTH. The healing effects of wireless mergers are not nearly upon us yet. In the meantime, Cingular is taking steps to "heal thyself." The price hikes are geared to boost profitability, even as it sacrifices sub growth. The particular increase in national plan rates announced this week are geared to both reduce off-network roaming costs and slow down the consumption of TDMA network capacity. SBC and BLS are fully expecting their joint venture to experience low to no sub growth as a result of these actions as well as the customer churn that will be stimulated by the WorldCom reseller shift.

CAPEX TO REVENUE SHOULD BE NO HIGHER THAN 15%, AND WILL BE LOWER ABSENT GROWTH. There is a broad effort to cut capex in both wireline and wireless operations. In wireline, Stephenson indicated that current thinking is that capex to sales should be no higher than 15%, and that in the current environment it should be no higher than 13%, and yet it is. Thus, further capex cuts should occur. In our view, if demand recovery continues to falter it would not be surprising to see capex to sales fall below the 13% rate, as it has in other countries. On the wireless side, capex cuts are also anticipated. In our view, slower capex spending in wireless is further supported by the prospects of industry consolidation.

COST REDUCTIONS KEY TO MAINTAINING EARNINGS AND BOOSTING MARGINS. SBC sees the margin differential between it and VZ and BLS as indicating an opportunity for further cost cutting. Pointing to opportunities in consolidating call centers, raising efficiencies in network operations, and generally trimming overhead costs, Stephenson is focused and confident in using these steps to help improve margins in the face of share loss.

CALIFORNIA DSL EXPERIENCE GIVES CONFIDENCE IN LONG TERM POTENTIAL. In California, SBC is enjoying the benefits of scale DSL operations, having achieved about 10% penetration so far. As a result, operations are already EBITDA positive and on the trajectory to reach SBC's targeted hurdle rate.

The steps that got California to scale include: an effective self-installation program, low help desk costs, effective churn control (down towards 2-3%), and effective marketing against the cable operators. SBC believes that mass market deployment of DSL will occur, and that tiered offerings are one step in getting there. This will allow lower monthly prices for lower speeds, but should be able to maintain an average monthly price of approximately \$40. This is a little higher than our long term estimate, but directionally our models look at the market in the same way. Due to the absence of long distance approval in California and the Ameritech states, SBC will continue to try to bundle DSL as a way of offsetting share loss, indicating that churn falls 75% for those customers taking DSL on top of their local service.

BLS: US\$ 25.99, SBC: US\$ 28.11, VZ: US\$ 32.35

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and/or its affiliates make a market or are the specialist in the following companies' securities: BellSouth Corp., and Verizon Communications. As such, the market maker or specialist may have an inventory position, either "long" or "short," in the relevant security and may be on the opposite side of orders executed on the relevant exchange.

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and/or its affiliates have received during the past 12 months compensation for investment banking services from the following companies, their parents, or their wholly owned or majority-owned subsidiaries: BellSouth Corp., SBC Communications, Inc., and Verizon Communications.

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and/or its affiliates expect to receive or intend to seek compensation for investment banking services in the next 3 months from these companies, their parents, or wholly owned or majority-owned subsidiaries: BellSouth Corp., SBC Communications, Inc., and Verizon Communications.

© 2002 The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. is a full-service, integrated investment banking, investment management, and brokerage firm. We are a leading underwriter of securities and a leading participant in virtually all trading markets. We have investment banking and other business relationships with a substantial percentage of the companies covered by our investment Research Department. Our research professionals provide important input into our investment banking and other business selection processes. Investors should assume that The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and/or its affiliates are seeking or will seek investment banking or other business from the company or companies that are the subject of this material and that the research professionals who were involved in preparing this material may participate in the solicitation of such business. Our research professionals are paid in part based on the profitability of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., which includes earnings from the firm's investment banking and other business. The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. generally prohibits its analysts, persons reporting to analysts, and members of their households from maintaining a financial interest in the securities or futures of any companies that the analysts cover. Additionally, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. generally prohibits its analysts, persons reporting to analysts, or members of their households from serving as an officer, director, or advisory board member of any companies that the analysts cover. Our salespeople, traders, and other professionals may provide oral or written market commentary or trading strategies to our clients that reflect opinions that are contrary to the opinions expressed herein, and our proprietary trading and investing businesses may make investment decisions that are inconsistent with the recommendations expressed herein. In reviewing these materials, you should be aware that any or all of the foregoing, among other things, may give rise to real or potential conflicts of interest. Additionally, other important information regarding our relationships with the company or companies that are the subject of this material is provided herein.

This material should not be construed as an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any security in any jurisdiction where such an offer or solicitation would be illegal. We are not soliciting any action based on this material. It is for the general information of clients of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. It does not take into account the particular investment objectives, financial situations, or needs of individual clients. Before acting on any advice or recommendation in this material, clients should consider whether it is suitable for their particular circumstances and, if necessary, seek professional advice. Certain transactions—including those involving futures, options, and other derivatives as well as non-investment-grade securities—give rise to substantial risk and are not suitable for all investors. The material is based on information that we consider reliable, but we do not represent that it is accurate or complete, and it should not be relied on as such. Opinions expressed are our current opinions as of the date appearing on this material only. We endeavor to update on a reasonable basis the information discussed in this material, but regulatory, compliance, or other reasons may prevent us from doing so. We and our affiliates, officers, directors, and employees, including persons involved in the preparation or issuance of this material, may from time to time have "long" or "short" positions in, act as principal in, and buy or sell the securities or derivatives (including options) thereof of companies mentioned herein. No part of this material may be (i) copied, photocopied, reproduced in any form by any means or (ii) redistributed without The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.'s prior written consent.

This material has been issued by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and/or one of its affiliates and has been approved by Goldman Sachs International, which is regulated by The Financial Services Authority in connection with its distribution in the United Kingdom and by Goldman Sachs Canada in connection with its distribution in Canada. This material is distributed in the United States by Goldman Sachs & Co., in Hong Kong by Goldman Sachs (Asia) L.L.C., in Korea by Goldman Sachs (Asia) L.L.C., Seoul Branch, in Japan by Goldman Sachs (Japan) Ltd., in Australia by Goldman Sachs Australia Pty Limited (ACN 092 589 770), and in Singapore by Goldman Sachs (Singapore) Pte. This material is not for distribution in the United Kingdom to private customers, as that term is defined under the rules of The Financial Services Authority; any investments, including any convertible bonds or derivatives mentioned in this material will not be made available by us to any such private customer. Goldman Sachs International and its non-US affiliates may, to the extent permitted under applicable law, have acted on or used this research, to the extent that it relates to non-US issuers, prior to or immediately following its publication. Foreign-currency-denominated securities are subject to fluctuations in exchange rates that could have an adverse effect on the value or price of, or income derived from, the investment. In addition, investors in securities such as ADRs, the values of which are influenced by foreign currencies, effectively assume currency risk. In addition, options involve risk and are not suitable for all investors. Please ensure that you have read and understood the current options disclosure document before entering into any options transactions.

Further information on any of the securities mentioned in this material may be obtained on request, and for this purpose, persons in Italy should contact Goldman Sachs S.I.M. S.p.A. in Milan or its London branch office at 133 Fleet Street, persons in Hong Kong should contact Goldman Sachs (Asia) L.L.C. at 2 Queen's Road Central, and persons in Australia should contact Goldman Sachs Australia Pty Limited. Unless governing law permits otherwise, you must contact a Goldman Sachs entity in your home jurisdiction if you want to use our services in effecting a transaction in the securities mentioned in this material.

Analyst coverage and other disclosure information is available at <http://www.gs.com/research/hedge.htm>

09:22am EDT 22-Aug-02 Legg Mason (Levin, Blair(202)778-1595) Q T VZ BLS SBC Q.N
Bells Retrain Guns on UNE-P, but Quick Kill Unlikely part 1

Legg Mason Wood Walker, Inc.

Industry Update
August 22, 2002

Blair Levin
blevin@leggmason.com
(202) 778-1595
Daniel Zito
dezito@leggmason.com
(410) 454-4333

Bells Retrain Guns on UNE-P, but Quick Kill Unlikely

All relevant disclosures appear on the last page of this report.

KEY POINTS:

- * We believe the debate at the FCC over the future of UNE-P has surpassed the broadband debate in intensity and near-term importance for the telecom sector, as the Bells have been thrown on the defensive due to line losses to rivals.
- * We believe that the Bells (SBC, BLS, VZ, Q) will have a difficult time convincing regulators to quickly eliminate the rights of local competitors to lease out Bell networks (UNE-P) at deep discounts. This is problematic for all the Bells but, in our view, is particularly problematic for SBC as its lack of long-distance progress in the Ameritech region makes it more vulnerable to UNE-P competitors. The Bells could gain some immediate relief in business markets (as well as some relief toward deregulating their broadband offerings in separate proceedings), but we doubt the FCC will eliminate UNE-P in residential markets in the near term.
- * We believe the Commission is likely to establish a sunset or triggers for phasing out UNE-P. While the details of such rules are far from settled, we think the result will give key UNE-P providers, WorldCom (WCOEQ) and AT&T (T), time to continue to change the facts on the ground. The more they win new local customers, the more they increase the potential for a backlash if the phase-out dismantles the main platform for residential competition.
- * Even if the FCC scraps or pares back UNE-P, many state regulators would likely try to retain it. Also, all decisions would be subject to court challenge that could take years to resolve, with the courts likely to maintain the legal status quo in the meantime.
- * While the Bells will not gain immediate regulatory relief, we believe that through bundling and other marketing efforts, they can significantly reduce the negative impact of UNE-P competition.
- * We believe another potential nightmare for the Bells would be if cable begins using UNE-P to accelerate its budding cable telephony offerings.

As we noted when WorldCom announced its "Neighborhood" plan, the intensified efforts by WorldCom (WCOEQ) and AT&T (T) to compete using the Bell Unbundled Network Elements Platform (UNE-P) has dramatically raised the stakes of the FCC unbundling policy debates. (See our April 23 note WCOM/MCI Bundled Phone Offer Challenges Rivals and Regulators.) The most recent Bell quarterly reports suggest that the impact of UNE-P is quickly growing. (For a discussion of the economics of UNE-P, see the report by our colleagues Daniel Zito and Brad Wilson, Cautious Long-Distance Outlook, June 27, 2002. For a state-by-state UNE pricing and sensitivity study, see attachment to VZ: Comments on RBOC Weakness, August 21, 2002, by our colleagues Michael J. Balhoff and Christopher. C. King.)

The impact of UNE-P has caused the Regional Bell Operating Companies (SBC, BLS, Q, VZ) to shift their priorities in seeking regulatory relief.

While the core Bell policy thrust had been to gain deregulation of their broadband services, recent events suggest the Bells have ramped up their lobbying efforts to cripple the ability of competitors to use UNE-P to gain market share in the traditional voice market.

Some in the Bell camp have predicted the FCC will act to eliminate UNE-P in a flash cut. FCC action on UNE-P is still months away (probably 4-8 months) but our current view is that prediction is likely to prove largely inaccurate in the near term, particularly concerning the availability of UNE-P in residential markets. This note outlines some of the dynamics affecting the resolution of the UNE-P debate.

Background on UNE-P. UNE-P offers competitors an opportunity to use all the UNEs at discounted "TELRIC" (Total Element Long Run Incremental Cost) rates and to add further value-added services on top of the platform. According to an industry estimate building on a FCC survey of incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs), of the 20-plus million lines won by long-distance companies (IXCs) and other local competitors (CLECs) as of June 2002, about 7.7 million are UNE-P based. It is the fastest growing method of competitive entry. In 2001, according to FCC data, more than 60% of the CLEC line growth was due to UNE-P, about twice the rate in 2000. T and WCOEQ are capturing most of the UNE-P line growth but other companies are responsible for about 43% of UNE-P lines.

Reasons for Increase in UNE-P Competition. While UNE-P has been available for some time, its use has ramped up significantly over the last year. In our view, this is due to two critical developments. First, numerous states have lowered wholesale UNE-P rates. Second, the Bells have achieved sufficient long-distance entry to give the IXCs the incentive to more aggressively use UNE-P to protect their existing markets.

Differing Impact on the Bells. UNE-P has had a differing impact on each of the Bells, affecting SBC and BLS more negatively in the last quarter than VZ. The reason for this difference, in our view, is that VZ's relative lead in gaining long-distance entry (with 74% of its lines already eligible) has given it the ability to bundle local and long distance in more states, providing a stronger defense against competition. As a measure of the value of long distance offerings in combating UNE-P competition, we note that SBC estimates that where it offers long distance, it doubles its winback rates. We also think that VZ's intensified strategy of bundling their landline voice services with wireless and Internet access services will provide an even stronger defense against UNE-P competitors.

We surmise that BLS will have greater success in stemming the tide of UNE-P line loss once it gains the right to offer long distance services in more states. It currently has applications pending in 5 of the remaining 7 states where it cannot offer such services. An FCC decision on these 5 is due in mid-September and we believe the prospects for approval are good.

In light of UNE-P competition, SBC's problems in advancing its Sec. 271 long-distance applications become more important to SBC's financial picture. This is particularly true in the Ameritech region and California. SBC has a large window of vulnerability in the Ameritech region where state regulators have been aggressive in providing incentives for UNE-P competition, but SBC has not made significant progress with the testing and verification required for Sec. 271 approval. In California, SBC has better prospects, as it hopes to send the FCC its long-distance application in September. Given the TELRIC price cuts just announced by the state PUC and California's size, we expect a major push by T to sign up customers before SBC gets approval to offer long distance services.

Q has some vulnerability to UNE-P, due to its lack of long-distance approval, but we expect Q to gain approval to offer long distance services in a number of states in the next several months. While Q's states are not the highest priority states for the UNE-P based competitors, we note that UNE-P competition has attracted more than 5% market share in Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

The Bells' Attack on UNE-P. The Bells have two basic strategies for attacking the viability of UNE-P. First, they can challenge the TELRIC discounts at both the federal and state levels in an effort to raise UNE-P rates and squeeze their competitors' margins. Verizon recently took this tact at the FCC through a letter by its General Counsel suggesting ways the agency could "clarify" TELRIC, all in ways that would have the affect of raising the price for competitors. We expect the other Bell companies to join this effort. The Bells are also likely to challenge individual state UNE pricing decisions in regulatory proceedings and in court. For example, SBC has already filed a petition to raise TELRIC rates in OH and we have heard they are considering filing a petition to do the same in Illinois, though they are waiting until after the November election, in which three of the five members of the State PUC could change. The Bells are also contemplating filing suits challenging some of the states' TELRIC decisions as an unconstitutional taking.

Second, as part of the FCC's "Triennial Review" proceeding, the Bells hope to convince the FCC to remove certain elements, most notably switching, from the UNE list. Such a decision would not only raise the cost of providing services through UNE-P, it also would make UNE-P impractical for the consumer market due to the difficulty of seamlessly migrating tens of thousands of lines from the ILEC's to the competitor's switches. We note that as offering unbundled switching is specifically listed as one of the requirements for gaining long-distance entry, the legal burden of eliminating the requirement is likely to be higher.

While the Republican majority at the Commission wants to move in a deregulatory direction, we do not believe that majority has yet decided how that impulse should be channeled in revising the UNE rules. The staff is evaluating the effects of UNEs in various markets, and that analysis, particularly regarding the impact of UNE-P on investment in facilities, could swing any of the commissioners in different directions. (The review is at an early stage as the staff is currently immersed in evaluating 17 pending Sec. 271 applications.) But some of the dynamics affecting the UNE-P policy process are already apparent.

FCC Direction: Set Out Path for Gradual Elimination of UNE-P. We believe that the FCC is likely to view UNE-P as a transitional vehicle to more facilities-based competition. We also believe that the Commission views the D.C. Circuit's May 24 *USTA v. FCC* ruling on UNEs favoring the ILECs, as subjecting any decision to eliminate an element on a national basis to a material legal risk. In that light, we believe the Commission is likely to view its job in the Triennial Review not as deciding whether to keep or eliminate UNE-P, but rather to set forth the right balance of incentives and market signals for creating a glide path from UNE-P to facilities-based competition.

Transitional Tools: Sunsets and Triggers. There are two basic ways the Commission could act. First, it can eliminate UNE-P at a date certain (a "sunset"). While that approach provides the most market certainty, it is legally vulnerable. Critics could attack an FCC projection of future market conditions as not reflecting the requirement that competitors' should be able to gain access to network elements without which their ability to compete would be "impaired." One way to mitigate the legal risk is to provide a "soft" sunset in which the date merely creates a presumption that the FCC would act to eliminate UNE-P. While such a rule is more defensible, it provides less certainty to the market and the companies, effectively delaying the ultimate debate for another day; a day, it is worth noting, in which the composition of the Commission and the market structure of the telecom industry could be very different.

(continued...)

First Call Corporation, a Thomson Financial company.
All rights reserved. 888.558.2500

]